

past president of the Pastors Conference of the Arkansas Board of Trustees of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, North Carolina.

Dale is currently serving the community as the pastor of the 6,000-member First Baptist Church in Fort Smith. Since his tenure at the church began 10 years ago, the church has grown by 2,451 members. This number is sure to continue to grow as long as Pastor Thompson remains actively involved in his community.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for allowing me the opportunity to honor Dale Thompson. He is a committed servant and deserves our praise.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

H.R. 1343, THE LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT HATE CRIMES PREVENTION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to encourage the Republican leadership to bring the Conyers bill, H.R. 1343, the Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act, to the House floor. Congress must take action against crimes that are motivated by hate. That is why I organized these speeches today to promote H.R. 1343. I appreciate all of my colleagues who have taken their precious time to come down to the House floor to join in on this discussion.

Hate crime offenses are more serious than comparable crimes that do not involve prejudice, because they are intended to intimidate an entire group. These crimes have a particularly damaging effect on victims, their families, and the communities they are part of. Victims oftentimes feel powerless, isolated, depressed and suspicious. Fear is another pervasive victim response, fear for their personal safety and for the safety of their families.

Family members share some of the long-term effects of hate crime victims. They may feel guilty for not protecting their family member who has been victimized. Like those actually targeted by the hate crimes, families may feel isolated or helpless. Their effectiveness on the job or at home or in school is also affected. When the perpetrator is arrested and convicted, but not given a full consideration and a harsh penalty, families actually lose faith in the justice system. Light sentencing may also cause further disillusionment.

In addition to the psychological effects hate crimes have on families, Mr. Speaker, there are particular concerns

as well depending on the crime and there may be repair bills or medical bills or funeral expenses. Trials and court appearances can prolong the grieving process, as can parole hearings. If there is media coverage of a hate crime, a family may find itself dealing publicly with intensely personal issues.

Currently, the Justice Department's civil rights division lists nine killings across the country as possible hate crimes in revenge for the terrorist attacks on September 11. Many families of post-September 11 murder victims believe that police are reluctant to recognize and pursue hate crimes, which is a complaint that African American victims have made for years. These outcries from victims and their families signal that hate crimes need to be taken more seriously.

It is unbelievable that Congress has yet to pass significant legislation that will strengthen and expand hate crimes law. And it is unbelievable that when there is a bill already crafted that would elevate hate crimes law that Congress has the opportunity to debate, it has not been brought to the House floor.

Mr. Speaker, I support the Conyers Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Protection Act because it would offer real solutions by strengthening existing Federal hate crimes law. This legislation allows the United States Department of Justice to assist in local prosecutions, as well as investigate and prosecute cases in which violence occurs because of the victim's sexual orientation, disability, or gender. H.R. 1343 would also eliminate obstacles to Federal involvement in many cases of assault or murder based on race or religion.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is too important to ignore as families across our country continue to fall victim to hate crimes. We have over 200 bipartisan Members of the House of Representatives who have signed on to H.R. 1343, and we ask the leadership to bring this issue before the House to show American families that hate crimes are taken seriously.

This Congress has a responsibility to fight against hate and this bill will provide that commitment. I look forward to hearing the rest of my colleagues on this issue.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. GANSKE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. GANSKE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. NORTON addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mrs. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. JONES of Ohio addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

BRINGING TO HOUSE FLOOR H.R. 1343, THE LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT HATE CRIMES PREVENTION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I will not take my 5 minutes, but I will yield the balance of the time to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY).

Mr. Speaker, the Conyers-Woolsey hate crimes bill is approaching that critical mass where we will soon have the 218 votes. This Special Order is generated to pick up the last dozen or so cosponsors that we would like to have to have the bill brought forward as quickly as possible.

The Members will recall that there has been hate crimes legislation since 1968, and what we do is take away some of the restrictions which would prevent us from bringing in Federal jurisdiction to aid local law enforcement. This bill does not supplant the law enforcement at the local level. We assist them and work in a cooperative spirit with them.

Particularly, we take away the existing Federal jurisdictional requirements that a Federal act is impeded upon as a result of the incident. For example, voting, interstate commerce, or some other Federal nexus is required to trigger the bill under its current legal status. What we do is to say for crimes of gender, sex, sexual orientation, we remove a Federal requirement because a hate crime is a hate crime whether there is a Federal nexus or not.

Many States have hate crimes legislation, except for the fact that 21 of them are admittedly very weak. Five States have none at all. What we are doing is in the wake of September 11, what we are doing is saying that there has been a dramatic increase of hate crimes activity. The lawyers on the Committee on the Judiciary have discovered with the Council for Islamic Relations that there are nearly 1,500 reported cases, frequently of people who were mistaken to be of Arab descent and were not, but they were clearly crimes that would fall into this category that we find so offensive.